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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, RI

THE MEDIA-MILITARY RELATIONSHIP: ENDURING CRITICAL ASPECTS FOR  
THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

by

Carl R. Cherry  
Lieutenant Commander, USN

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

4 February 2002

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Commander Erik J. Dahl, USN  
Instructor, JMO Department

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## **ABSTRACT**

Even in the Information Age, there are critical enduring aspects of the media-military relationship. Mutual trust, knowing each other's mission, and understanding the impact of the modern media on operations are three aspects which today's operational commander should better understand.

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They're not Americans. They're just journalists.<sup>1</sup>

*Colonel George M. Connell, USMC*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Mention the media to an American operational commander and he is likely to grimace and change the subject. A similar response is likely if the military is mentioned to a media veteran. Although the awkward media-military relationship of today is nothing new, the unfolding Information Age exacerbates the issue. The ease and speed of technology give an air of immediacy to the news that seems revolutionary; it appears on the surface to have changed the rules of engagement -- to the apparent disadvantage of the military. However, some fundamental factors of a successful media-military relationship have altered little through the nation's history -- even with the coming of the Information Age.

A healthy media-military relationship is just as important in the Information Age as it ever was -- and some would argue more so. Nevertheless, U.S. operational commanders can do a better job in understanding the aspects of this relationship that have remained consistent over time. This paper analyzes three of the most critical: maintaining mutual trust; having a shared comprehension of each other's mission; and thoroughly understanding the modern media's potential impact on operations. In addition, this paper argues that 24-hour news programs, instant reporting and other elements that make up the Information Age have not dramatically altered any of these aspects. While technological advances such as satellite communications and the Internet have in some cases increased or altered the media's role, the three critical aspects analyzed herein have been relatively constant since at least the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

Success on today's battlefield requires a thorough understanding of the news media. If nurtured over time, healthy relations help win wars. Even so, a contemporary commander is likely to misunderstand and distrust -- or at least be overly wary of -- the media. How is it that such a potentially positive tool available to the commander is so often viewed with a jaundiced eye?

### **MUTUAL TRUST: ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN**

Publicity must be accepted by our captains, generals, and men-at-arms, as the necessary condition of any grand operation of war: and the endeavour to destroy the evil will only give it fresh vigour, and develop its powers of mischief.<sup>2</sup>

*William Russell, Crimean War correspondent, 1854*

The first vital aspect of the relationship is mutual trust. It seems like a simple concept, yet history shows how complicated it can be. The American military's first experience with rapid news reporting foreshadowed what the future had in store. At the first battle of Bull Run, the telegraph provided Lincoln with rapid feedback -- albeit with a reporter's slant. Although the reporting was timely, it was also characterized as being rarely objective.<sup>3</sup> Grant and Sherman would later complain that because of the telegraph, Lincoln often knew about battlefield specifics before they did. Thus the seeds of uneasiness were planted in the military's mind; an entity that might garner information superiority in the field was to be looked on with suspicion. Today's satellite communications do not introduce new phenomena; they simply accelerate Grant's and Sherman's concerns.

World War II produced a high degree of media-military trust and is noteworthy for some of the media precedents it set. First, unlike any U.S. conflict since, it was a total war. Wars for the national survival put all citizens on a more equal footing; it makes mutual trust between combatant and reporter a fairly common commodity. Naturally, the press is not

nearly as likely to compromise secrets or endanger troops just to “get the scoop.”

Additionally, World War II saw widespread use of censorship -- an accepted practice that would become a problem in future limited conflicts.

### **The Watershed**

Any trust or camaraderie that developed between the media and the military before the Vietnam War quickly vaporized during that conflict. It is, by most accounts, the watershed event in modern U.S. media-military relations. Unique aspects of the war -- its limited nature, multi-layered aspects, duration, political and military leadership, and inexperienced reporters -- all combined to scar the relationship. Incompetence and deception on the military side met sensationalism and biased reporting from the media.

The war also introduced a new element for American commanders to deal with in the battle for public support. It was something that hadn't been seen since the Spanish-American War: reporters on the ground in the enemy's capital. As Tom Sharpe puts it:

The North Vietnamese [were] blessed with a weapon that no military device known to America could ever get a lock on. As if by magic . . . in Hanoi . . . appears . . . Harrison Salisbury writing in the *New York Times* about the atrocious American bombing of the hard scrabble folks of North Vietnam in the Iron Triangle.<sup>4</sup>

This phenomenon is now commonplace, with the press often warmly invited into the adversary's camp. It's certainly something that should not take today's commander by surprise. Unfortunately, this doesn't contribute to earning a commander's trust, as one may wonder about a reporter's motivation for such extreme objectivity -- much less his patriotism. Chief news anchor for Cable News Network, Bernard Shaw, raised potential ethical questions during a media-military roundtable “ . . . when he implied the existence of an extra-national obligation for journalists.”<sup>5</sup>



In Vietnam, military and political leaders also felt the sting of the latest media gadget -- the television. The American public had the sights and sounds of battle beamed into their living rooms. Damning reports through TV's narrow telescope didn't coincide with official statements, and commanders were compelled to "spin" the war in the opposite direction. Eventually, unfiltered reports were seen as threatening. But it didn't have to be that way. Martin van Creveld writes, "Probably none of this...would have happened had not the normal channels of military information been deficient to begin with."<sup>6</sup>

Whether the media is partly responsible for U.S. misfortune in Vietnam, one fact appears evident: the Vietnam War formed the foundation for today's senior leadership attitude about the media. And today's senior commander or policy maker has an editor counterpart of similar age and experience with respect to that war. It will take the passing of Vietnam-era leaders for this chapter to finally close; until then, Vietnam will continue to be the war that won't go away. Even then, the distrust may very well pervade:

It remains probable the senior officers, as a group the most adamant about the adverse effect of Vietnam media coverage, passed the virus of mistrust on to their successors, and they will, in turn, pass it on to their successors, and so on, so that acceptance of the conviction becomes, in effect, a right of passage, a badge of membership in the fraternity.<sup>7</sup>

Media-military trust improved somewhat after Vietnam, although not without some interesting learning points along the way. America's experience in Southeast Asia, combined with the British experience in the Falklands, led the Reagan administration to deny outright media coverage during the initial phases of the 1993 Grenada invasion. The press reacted with outrage, demanding a review of media policies within the Department of Defense. That

conflagration led to the Sidle Report\* and the implementation of press pools for the 1989 Panama invasion and the Gulf War.

This resulting sanitization of press coverage disturbed the media. Moreover, pools severely limited the development of relationships between reporters and troops on the ground or at sea. Using the press for disinformation also didn't help. For instance, "...military officials fed news-hungry journalists false information about how (the ground war) would be carried out."<sup>8</sup> After the war, the press felt deceived by the amount of control, as well as by what they saw as outright manipulation. Percentages of overall bombing accuracy, for instance, were given for *guided* munitions -- yet the vast majority of bombs dropped were the dumb variety. This highlights something that today's commander must consider in maintaining the trust of the media as well as the public: "The most common form of media manipulation is suppression by omission."<sup>9</sup> The commander must realize that partial truths -- let alone outright lies -- can be seen as deception; and any sense of deception is deadly to this relationship.

While today's wary commander may wish to return to the days of Ernie Pyle, modern-day limited wars with virtually unlimited media access make censorship not only difficult but also undesirable in the Information Age. It certainly inhibits the development of trust. Though there will always be some concern about the maverick reporter looking for an edge, or the uninformed TV crew broadcasting scenes which they don't know are harmful to security, recent cases highlight that censorship is simply not required if the media is taken onboard early. Writing on the legal aspects of censorship, Aukofer and Lawrence sum up the current feeling: "With the advance of new technology, such as satellite telephones, most

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\* In 1984, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Vessey, in response to the media outcry over Grenada, convened a panel headed by General Winant Sidle. The formation of press pools during military

military as well as news-organization leaders have become convinced that battlefield censorship is no longer practical or even desirable.”<sup>10</sup>

### **The Latest Turn**

Since the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the trust pendulum appears to have swung to the opposite side from where it was in the 1960s and after Desert Storm. While the war on terrorism is not total war, the homeland attacks have had a unifying effect between the military and the reporters on scene. The patriotic fervor has undoubtedly influenced media coverage of the war; negative reporting is not going to sell papers, at least not in the early phases of this conflict. Reporters appear content with limited access, trusting the commanders and their representatives as they give daily briefings.

The military and its political leadership, for their part, seem less inclined to show a sanitary, Desert Storm-like war and openly admit that the struggle will be a long one. The result has been a temporary role-reversal. According to the open-source intelligence journal *Strategic Forecasting*, “The military’s public affairs officers, normally cheerleaders, have taken the role of scolding nannies, reminding the media that the war is going to be long and hard; the media has taken the role of cheerleader, creating a picture of a war filled with stunning and replicable victories.”<sup>11</sup> As time passes, however, the pendulum will likely swing the other way. The press historically is easily led in the opening days of a conflict; but as shown in Vietnam, prolonged conflicts usually result in fissures developing. Leadership ends up straining to explain to an impatient audience why the war continues; mistrust develops on both sides.

Posing possible problems in the future, Information Operations (IO) and Information Warfare (IW) are perhaps the most dangerous areas with respect to maintaining mutual trust.

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operations -- controlled by the Department of Defense and the services -- was the enduring result.

While media deception might be employed during a total war, any shading of the truth in a limited conflict for the purpose of operational advantage is likely to do more harm than good -- as noted in Desert Storm. That the PA Officer is not an overt IW tool is lost on many senior war fighters. During a war game at a previous command, the PA Officer at the Naval War College was surprised when she was asked by several senior officers to lie to the media for operational deception; they were equally surprised when she refused.<sup>12</sup>

The military's need for secrecy and public support will always conflict with the media's need to tell its story and sell newspapers. Mutual trust will never come easily. At one extreme, a government advisor proposes to "tell them nothing till it's over and then I'd tell them who won."<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, the liberal *Village Voice* decries that, with respect to the war on terrorism, "we'll find out in five years what the real truth is."<sup>14</sup> A reasonable balance between the two extremes will be naturally stressful. And while the nature of the conflict plays a part in the trust factor, the relationship can still be productive. "Reciprocity will be the motive for cooperation on all sides."<sup>15</sup>

## **UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER'S MISSION**

The essence of successful warfare is secrecy;  
the essence of successful journalism is publicity.<sup>16</sup>

*Preface to the British Ministry of Defense's instructions to Task Force-bound correspondents.*

The second critical aspect of a successful media-military relationship is an understanding of each other's missions and, more generally, professions. At first glance, the professional journalist and the military professional appear to have very little in common. Military men and women are formally indoctrinated into a separate culture, take oaths, and live by rules and regulations. Winning wars is mission number one. Journalists, on the other

hand, “have no written ethical code or mandated list of qualifications for members (and are made up of) reporters, editors and business managers who have two missions: objective news reporting and profit making.”<sup>17</sup> William Kennedy sums up the professions as one of “patriotism” versus one of “skepticism.”<sup>18</sup> Educating the military about the media - and vice versa - seems of paramount importance in today’s world of 24-hour news. Yet it’s simply not seen with any regularity.

### **Is This Off the Record?**

The majority of officers -- even mid-grade careerists -- receive very little training about the media; they simply have no clue on how to address them. This observation is based in part on the author’s experience. National news correspondents have approached this author on three occasions during his fourteen years in the Navy. All three times were immediately after flying combat missions over the Balkans. Although obviously operating at the tactical level, the reporters seemed very interested in what the author had to say about the operation in general. The first interview consisted of, “No comment.” The next two were somewhat more productive. However, upbringing had taught him that the press offered nothing to gain -- only something to lose. The main thing that kept running through his mind was *don’t say anything that’s classified or politically incorrect*.

The danger with an uneducated force is that senior commanders will still be hoping to say “no comment” when that is no longer an option. The occasional war game or “media day” experience is good, yet training is lacking in the junior ranks. Naval line officers who have the collateral duty of being their ship or squadron PA (Public Affairs) Officer receive no training whatsoever. As a former Army PA says, “What we fail to teach people in uniform in their earliest days is that they have a responsibility to participate in the process.”<sup>19</sup>

The one group within the military that should understand the media is the full-time Public Affairs Officer. Most PAs are highly qualified, motivated people -- yet they are stretched thin. Moreover, coordination with IO planners is often less than ideal. For example, IO planners were not co-located with other operational planners during Operation Allied Force. The result was an uncoordinated effort. Additionally, joint planning publications don't place media planning high on the priority list. PA and media issues at the theater Commander-in-Chief (CINC) and Joint Task Force (JTF) level are listed in very brief, broad terms in joint publications such as *JTF Planning Guidance and Procedures*. Moreover, media affairs are not addressed at all until Phase II of crisis action planning.

Unfortunately, some of the problems with maintaining a healthy media relationship are self-inflicted by the commander. A recent head of public affairs for the Air Force admits that much of the current lack of openness within the military comes largely from the PAs themselves. “. . . It's the PAs who get berated when something is misquoted. They sometimes get beat . . . by their commanders, so they have this reticence to be open and honest.”<sup>20</sup> With or without a strong background in media affairs, subordinates are impacted by a commander's personality and his attitude toward the press. As senior editor Peter Braestrup notes, General Boomer made great strides with his Marines' relationship with the press during the Gulf War. However, he adds, “You can train the hell out of the [junior ranks] but the military-media relationship falls apart if you get a Schwarzkopf out there.”<sup>21</sup>

### **I was Hoping to Interview a Tomahawk Pilot**

While most Service members have little knowledge of the press, the media's knowledge void of modern military operations -- and foreign affairs in general -- is perhaps even more problematic. Traditional news organizations are cutting costs to compete with

Internet media. They are closing foreign bureaus. They are “sending parachutists abroad with no knowledge of local customs or even national trends.”<sup>22</sup> The media plays to an audience with a short attention span, and little military or foreign affairs knowledge itself. Adding to the problem, reporters know that positive reporting on the military isn’t really what their editors want. Even experienced reporters are apt to accentuate the negative. Fred Reed, a successful freelancer, asserts that he can easily sell articles criticizing the military, but that a piece praising anything the Services do is nearly impossible to peddle.<sup>23</sup> Combine speed of communication, a reporter lacking local knowledge, and the fog of war, and all the ingredients are in place for a frustrating media-military relationship.

Indoctrinating young reporters in the ways of the military in order to avoid ignorance and distrust during crises has been broached in the past.<sup>\*</sup> The problem with most plans is cost and fairness. Only the largest news organizations can send reporters to military exercises; it’s unlikely the *Providence Journal* could let go of a reporter for a few weeks of training as easily as the *Washington Post* could. Moreover, such peacetime training is unlikely due to the lack of newsworthiness of training exercises. Problems, therefore, persist. “. . .The largest single gap in current defense reporting (is) coverage of the major U.S. and allied military commands. Since no thought would ever be given to diverting resources from the sports department, (it) is beyond the economic resources of any one major regional or national journalistic institution.”<sup>24</sup> Thus, the pool system, activated during times of crisis, continues in its varied forms.

Finally, if reporters are allowed to integrate into military units, a mutual understanding typically develops that helps cut through the differences in professional

upbringing. Reporters learn first-hand the huge responsibilities of all involved -- from the commander down to the front-line soldier. Likewise, Service members see how both themselves and the reporter “want a front-row seat on the action.”<sup>25</sup> Perhaps media and military professionals have more in common than they realize. In defending the media’s role in war coverage, Clem Lloyd notes the common traits between the media and military professional: “. . . initiative, forward planning mixed with flexibility (and) unsocial hours . . .”<sup>26</sup> to name a few. After spending over seven months on an aircraft carrier, veteran *Washington Post* reporter George Wilson comments on the experience: “There’s this kind of popular conception that the military and the press are direct opposites. But in the field, they get to realize how much alike they are.”<sup>27</sup>

## **THE IMPACT ON OPERATIONS AND DECISION-MAKING**

The media’s impact on military operations and a commander’s decision-making process is the third critical aspect. It has been enduring; as this paper shows, the media has been affecting operations and commanders at least since the advent of the telegraph over 150 years ago. Yet the speed at which the modern, 24/7 media operate makes this aspect not only enduring, but also growing in importance. The media now have the ability to impact military operations at all levels, to contribute greatly to information overload, and, when allowed, compress the decision cycle for civilian policy makers. The media have both helped and hindered the intelligence and IO effort. Perhaps more so than military technology, the media can, for better or worse, shorten the Observe-Orient-Decide-Act (OODA) loop for the operational commander.

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\* Several media experts suggest the creation of an independently funded media-military training program. See Aukofer and Lawrence for their proposal of the Independent Coverage Tier Concept.



## Info Overload

In *Command in War*, Martin van Creveld describes what he calls “information pathology” and the tendency, starting in Vietnam, to over-saturate military leaders with data. “. . . While up-to-date technical means of communication and data processing are absolutely vital . . . they will not in themselves suffice for the creation of a functioning command system, and that they may . . . constitute part of the disease they are supposed to cure.”<sup>28</sup> The ever-increasing challenge to obtain useable information from a sea of data is amplified when the media is injected into the equation. As open source intelligence is an element of modern operations, the flood of media information can’t be ignored.

As command and control systems have become more robust, so have the commercial systems that the media use. Any monopoly on information technology that the military might have once had is waning. This has emboldened some reporters to be more self-reliant. While many senior commanders aren’t comfortable with high-tech, journalists embrace technology, thinking it will “free them from the military’s control over transportation and dissemination of their copy.”<sup>29</sup> According to Peter Arnett of CNN, “[Policy makers] can talk tough, but time is on our side and technology is on our side.”<sup>30</sup>

With technological advances in news coverage typically comes a reevaluation of current policies. It’s vital that today’s commander keep abreast of this evolutionary process. New technologies or techniques prompt a review of combat reporting guidelines.\* Newsreels and live radio from World War II inspired censorship; television in Vietnam brought media exclusion in Grenada; and satellite communications helped bring about the pool system of today. The Information Age will perpetuate this cycle.

## **Wolf Blitzer Said To Nuke ‘Em, General**

The media's effect on political and military decision-making became a common topic in the 1990s. With the fall of the Soviet Union, U.S. foreign policy was in a state of flux. Additionally, technology made worldwide reporting easier and, arguably, more dynamic. The result of these two factors was the perception that the media was having a large impact on U.S. diplomacy and foreign policy. This phenomenon -- the so-called "CNN Effect" -- has three aspects upon which most experts agree: it influences agendas; it impedes operations (e.g. threatens security); and it accelerates (shortens) decision-making response time.<sup>31</sup> Assuming "agendas" are set primarily by civilian policy makers, impeding operations and shortening response times are most applicable to the operational commander; these are addressed in turn.

The modern media have always had the capacity to hinder operations. The differences today are that it can be done in real time and by almost anyone. This is perhaps the one aspect of the media-military relationship that the Information Age has indeed markedly influenced. An individual with a satellite telephone can be a "reporter." This growing independence will require increased awareness on the commander's part. Although it's unlikely a credentialed reporter would purposefully sabotage a mission, the possibility for inadvertent disclosure is real. During the Gulf War, for instance, an American television network disclosed the precise location of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division during its westward maneuver through Iraq.

The media has increasingly shortened the response time for both policy makers and military leaders at all levels. Operational commanders need to understand that orders coming

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\* Sociologist W. F. Ogburn's theory of "cultural lag" applies to this aspect of the relationship: "A cultural lag occurs when one of two parts of a culture which are correlated changes before or in greater degree than the

down from above may be directly tied to this phenomenon. “Time for reaction is compressed. Analysis and intelligence gathering is out.”<sup>32</sup> While commanders may bemoan this accelerant aspect of the media, it’s important to realize that it works both ways. One of President Bush’s advisors during Desert Storm had a realistic outlook: “We felt we could manage public opinion in this country and that we could manage the alliance . . . as well as get to the Iraqi people and the Arab world.”<sup>33</sup>

Although the CNN Effect was the subject of much debate in the early 1990s, some now see it as on the decline in its impact on policy makers and the military. James Hoge, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, thinks it has largely played out its hand:

It seems to me that about (1995) we reached the high water mark. Today, . . . television news has a tactical effect from time to time, but not a strategic one; that it operates more when humanitarian issues are at hand than when actual security issues are.<sup>34</sup>

One element of the CNN Effect that’s rarely addressed is how personality dependent it is. In the end, political leaders are responsible for policy that impacts the military -- not the media. Though some leaders are more influenced than others, it’s unwise for commanders to blame the media for decisions made at any level. Influence seems to vary, much like the influence of the Information Age in general. Navy Captain Robert Rubel sums it up well: “Abraham Lincoln tried to micromanage the Union Army with the telegraph...while George Bush left his coalition commander in a guidance vacuum during cease-fire talks after Desert Storm despite the availability of telephones and fax machines.”<sup>35</sup>

Finally, there are two dangers of knowing the impact of the media on operations and planning accordingly. First, while embracing the potentially positive effect of today’s media, today’s commander should be cautioned not to pay too much attention to winning the war of

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other part does, thereby causing less adjustment between the two parts than existed before.”

public support to the detriment of the larger war effort. “Media technology provides new weapons to be exploited, particularly on the battlefield of public opinion, but they are of little use if the war is lost in the combat zone. For all the magic of new media technology, it is better to win the war even if you lose the press.”<sup>36</sup>

The second danger is the temptation to pursue an operation based on anticipated positive play in the press. Just the perception of operations conducted primarily for headlines will lose the faith of subordinates. The botched special operations raid of a Taliban-held airbase early in the war on terrorism -- filmed by military cameramen and quickly edited and released to the media -- highlights the danger:

There was . . . disdain among Delta Force soldiers . . . for what they saw as the staged nature of the assault...which had produced such exciting television footage. “It was sexy stuff, and it looked good,” one general said. (Said a participant), “Why would you film it? I’m a big fan of keeping things secret -- and this was being driven by public opinion.”<sup>37</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

It is vital for the operational commander to understand better the media-military relationship -- both its history and where it’s heading. This paper has addressed three enduring critical aspects of the media-military relationship. Today’s commander should grasp how these aspects are impacted from both sides of the relationship -- and how operations may be helped or hindered as a result. The aspects addressed have not changed significantly, even with the advent of the Information Age.

Mutual trust remains a tenuous commodity. Though the commander can do things to help, the nature of the two professions will always make trust the most fragile aspect of the relationship. Misperceptions and ignorance of each other’s missions hinder the development of a consistent, productive relationship. Lastly, though an omnipresent media has meant a

larger presence in military operations, the fundamentals of sound leadership and decision making remain constant.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are several things the Services and operational commanders can do that would better the chances for success in media relations. First, in all endeavors, education is the key to eliminating ignorance, fear, and prejudice. The Services must do a better job in teaching military members at all pay grades how to address the media. It should start with accession programs and continue as a bona-fide part of General Military Training (GMT). This is especially important in the junior ranks, as the new generation of leaders needs to break the negative influence of the Vietnam generation. Additionally, with limited, high visibility conflicts now almost routine, a single event on the tactical level may have tremendous repercussions on the operational and even strategic levels. Actions that were once lost as just part of a larger operation are now worthy of headlines. Junior members should therefore know how to handle the press when approached after a high-visibility mission.

Encouraging the press to participate in operational exercises is another thing the commander can do to educate both his subordinates and the media. High turnover rates in both the media and the military mean little institutional memory exists in either staffs or press pools. If the press is reluctant to participate due to cost, perhaps the commander should finance their participation. This would certainly pay for itself when those same reporters were tasked with covering real-world operations. Get the media in the trenches before hostilities and they'll have a better appreciation for the military mission.

Another area for improvement is in joint doctrine and how it addresses planning. How an operation will play in the press should be addressed from the outset. If crisis action planning has commenced, it's likely the media is aware of the crisis as well. Phase I of a crisis action plan should include laying the foundation for media relations. Additionally, Commanders should not lump all IO into another hopper outside the mainstream planning as was done in the Kosovo campaign. The method used to disseminate PA information is established in operational planning -- typically as *Annex F*. Unfortunately, some media professionals interpret that as proof that media affairs is not a priority for the military. Says Pete Williams, "If you look at how the planning process works, it's an annex to the plan."<sup>38</sup>

One thing that is reflected in joint doctrine, but risks being disregarded by senior planners, is the relationship between IO and PA. IO, by joint doctrine, cannot target domestic audiences. Therefore, PA is the principal tool for liaison with the media.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, insisting upon truthfulness from the PA -- within the limits of operational security -- is mandatory.

Promoting the careers of competent PA officers should be in the scan of an operational commander. PAs, like most support officers, are often considered second-class citizens because most lack a warfare designator or rating. Yet as modern media relations appear to be as important as any one of the principles of war, the commander should realize the importance of keeping good people in the profession. "Until the PAO is important on the general's staff . . . you're not going to get the best and brightest into public affairs."<sup>40</sup>

Finally, there is some excellent general guidance in current doctrine. Regardless of the commander's opinion of the media, he is reminded of his responsibility to the press: "The news media are the principal means of communicating information about the military to

the general public, and military journalists are the principal source of communication with military personnel, civilian employees, and family members. It is important that commanders recognize this fact.”<sup>41</sup>

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> George M. Connell, quoted in William V. Kennedy, The Military and the Media: Why the Press Cannot Be Trusted to Cover a War, (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 24.

<sup>2</sup> William Russell, quoted in Miles Hudson and John Stanier, War and the Media. (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 17.

<sup>3</sup> Charles C. Moskos and Thomas E. Ricks, Reporting War When There Is No War. (Chicago: Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, 1996), 15.

<sup>4</sup> Tom Sharpe, quoted in Hudson and Stanier, 110.

<sup>5</sup> Terrence M. Fox, "The Media and the Military: An Explanatory Theory of the Evolution of the Guidelines for Coverage of Conflict," (Unpublished Research Paper, The Florida State University College of Communication, Tallahassee, FL: 1995), 147.

<sup>6</sup> Martin Van Creveld, Command in War. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 258

<sup>7</sup> Fox, 134.

<sup>8</sup> Everette E. Dennis and others, The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict. (New York: Gannett, 1991), 20.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Parenti, "Methods of Media Manipulation," MEDIAFile, Volume 17 #5, <<http://www.media-alliance.org/mediafile/17-5/manipulation.html>>, [5 December 2001].

<sup>10</sup> Frank Aukofer and William P. Lawrence. America's Team; The Odd Couple -- A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military. (Nashville, TN: The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1995), 49.

<sup>11</sup> "Media and War, Appearance and Reality," Strategic Forecasting, January 15 2002, <http://www.stratfor.com/home/0201151930a.htm>, [16 January 2002].

<sup>12</sup> Susan Haeg, CDR, USN, Public Affairs Officer, Naval War College, Newport, RI, interview by author, 14 December 2001, Naval War College, Newport, RI.

<sup>13</sup> Phillip Knightly, "In Wartime, Government Considers Media a Menace," The Public i, October 31 2001, <[http://www.publici.org/commentary\\_01\\_103101.htm](http://www.publici.org/commentary_01_103101.htm)>, [14 December 2001].

<sup>14</sup> Rick Perlstein, "The Media Muzzled," The Village Voice, December 12, 2001, <<http://www.villagevoice.com/issues/0150/perlstein.php>>, [1 January 2002].



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- <sup>15</sup> Moskos and Ricks, 40.
- <sup>16</sup> D. Mercer and others, The Fog of War: The Media on the Battlefield. (London: Heinemann, 1987), 3.
- <sup>17</sup> Barry E. Willey, “The Military-Media Connection: For Better or for Worse”, Military Review, February 1999: 14.
- <sup>18</sup> Kennedy, 13.
- <sup>19</sup> Bill Smullen, quoted in Aukofer and Lawrence, 167.
- <sup>20</sup> Ronald T. Sconyers, quoted in Aukofer and Lawrence, 64.
- <sup>21</sup> Peter Braestrup, quoted in Aukofer and Lawrence, 100.
- <sup>22</sup> Johanna Neuman, Lights, Camera, War. (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 272.
- <sup>23</sup> Fred Reed quoted in Kennedy, 14.
- <sup>24</sup> Kennedy, 150.
- <sup>25</sup> George Wilson, quoted in Aukofer and Lawrence, 85.
- <sup>26</sup> Clem Lloyd, “The Case for the Media”, in Peter R. Young, ed., Defense and the Media in Time of Limited War (Portland, OR: Frank Bass, 1992), 63.
- <sup>27</sup> George Wilson, quoted in Aukofer and Lawrence, 85.
- <sup>28</sup> Van Creveld, 259.
- <sup>29</sup> Neuman, 263.
- <sup>30</sup> Peter Arnett, quoted in Neuman, 263.
- <sup>31</sup> Stephen Livingston, Clarifying the CNN Effect: An Examination of Media Effects According to Type of Military Intervention, Research Paper R-18 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government, 1997), 2.
- <sup>32</sup> Margaret Tutwiler, quoted in Livingston, 3.
- <sup>33</sup> Richard Haass, quoted in Livingston, 3.
- <sup>34</sup> James Hoge, Jr., quoted in Livingston, 2.

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<sup>35</sup> Robert C. Rubel, “Principles of Jointness,” Joint Force Quarterly, 27 (Winter 2000-01): 49.

<sup>36</sup> Neuman, 274.

<sup>37</sup> Seymour M. Hersh, “Escape and Evasion -- What happened when the Special Forces landed in Afghanistan?,” The New Yorker, (12 November 2001): 50.

<sup>38</sup> Pete Williams, quoted in Aukofer and Lawrence, 170.

<sup>39</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Information Operations, Joint Pub 3-13, (Washington, D.C.: 1998), I-13.

<sup>40</sup> William Mulvey, quoted in Aukofer and Lawrence, 135.

<sup>41</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-61, (Washington, D.C.: 1998), vi.

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